

Message to Constituents

U.S. Congressman Elijah E. Cummings

Representing the 7th U.S. Congressional District of Maryland

September 30, 2004
<http://www.mail.house.gov/cummings>

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Dear Constituent:

It is both a privilege and an honor to represent you in the United States Congress. While serving you, I will continue my outreach efforts to inform you of legislative action. I welcome your advice. Government "by the people" is the cornerstone of my legislative philosophy.

To better serve you closer to home, I invite you to visit or contact one of my district offices, listed on the following pages. In Howard County, my staff and I make regular outreach visits at various community centers. We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Elijah E. Cummings

Congressman Cummings Announces \$500K Drug-Free Communities Support Grant

On Sept. 27, Congressman Cummings, joined by White House Office of National Drug Policy Director John P. Walters and several U.S. Senators, announced that the Collington Square Coalition for Drug-Free Communities received a \$99,967 matching grant for FY 2004 from the federal Drug-Free Communities Support Program. Over the next five years, the Coalition will receive nearly \$500,000 through the program, which is administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The grant is one of 226 new grants totaling \$21.9 million awarded to community anti-drug coalitions across the country. These coalitions are comprised of a diverse cross-section of parents, youth, teachers, religious leaders, businesses, law enforcement and community activists. They work to prevent and reduce drug, alcohol, and tobacco use among youth. The program provides grants of up to \$100,000 per year to community organizations that serve as catalysts for citizen participation in local drug prevention efforts.

"The Drug-Free Communities program is among the most popular federal programs for fighting substance abuse because it supports the grassroots efforts of individuals who come together from all walks of life for the purpose of combating a common threat to the entire community," Congressman Cummings said. "Neighborhood anti-drug activists are essential to eliminating drug abuse in our communities. That is why I am so unequivocal in my support of this program and eager to maximize its impact."

Three coalition representatives Arthur Weatherbee, Executive Director; Kirk "Dee" Harvey, Project Director; and Reverend Dr. H. Walden Wilson II attended the Sept. 27 ceremony at the U.S. Capitol. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-TN) as well as U.S. Senators Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Jeff Sessions (R-AL) also joined Congressman Cummings in announcing similar grants for their constituents.

Drug-Free Grant, From Pg. 1

The Collington Square Coalition for Drug Free Communities serves the Clifton-Berea district in the eastern part of Baltimore, an area deeply affected by illegal drug-use, according to Weatherbee. With its program *Kidmunity*, the Coalition aims to prevent drug abuse among school-aged children.

"This grant gives us solid working capital so that we can work with the school system to empower children, early on, to say no to the danger of drugs," said Weatherbee.

A competitive peer review process selected this year's awardees from 512 applicants. To qualify for matching grants, all awardees must have at least a six-month history of working together as a coalition on substance abuse reduction initiatives, develop a long-term plan to reduce substance abuse, and participate in a national evaluation of the Drug-Free Communities Program.

Congressman Cummings serves as the Ranking Member of the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources, that has oversight of the Drug-Free Communities Program. Created under the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997, the program has earned strong bipartisan support from Congress.

In December of 2001, Congress passed and the President signed into law a five-year extension of the Drug-Free Communities Act authorizing \$399 million in funds through FY 2007. During this most recent re-authorization, Congressman Cummings successfully worked to amend the legislation to assure that economically-disadvantaged communities receive priority funding.

Congressman Cummings Honors Debate Team Students

On September 23, Congressman Cummings joined ACE Cash Express to present the Baltimore Urban Debate League (BUDL) with a \$10,000 donation. ACE provided the donation to benefit students who partake in BUDL's public speaking and debate program.

Founded in 1999 by the non-profit Open Society Institute (OSI), the debate league aims to take students who are traditionally disengaged from the contemporary classroom and transform them into articulate debaters of public policy.

Currently, BUDL serves 450 students from 27 high schools across Baltimore City and is ranked third in the country among Urban Debate Leagues.

"The Baltimore Urban Debate League is very important because it encourages young people how to celebrate intellect," Congressman Cummings said. "The program builds self-esteem in students by showing them how to become engaged learners and then awarding them for their academic achievement."

BUDL is run collaboratively by OSI, the Baltimore City Public School System, Towson University, the Berkley Foundation at Atlanta's Emory University, and the Fund for Educational Excellence.

The \$10,000 donation from ACE will be used to help fund the tournament season and to send more students to summer debate camps.

For more information on BUDL, please go to <http://www.budl.org>.



Congressman Cummings, joined by Baltimore Mayor Martin O'Malley and City Council President Sheila Dixon, delivered completed voter registration forms to the Baltimore Board of Elections September 21. Local Elections Director Barbara Jackson has indicated that voter registrations are increasing substantially this year. The Sept. 21 event delivered hundreds of the thousands of new voter registrations generated by a city-wide, non-partisan volunteer effort. Media coverage of the event also stressed the importance of registering by Maryland's October 12 deadline.

Federal Grants Distributed to the 7th Congressional District

<u>Amount of Grant</u>	<u>Category/Project</u>	<u>Recipient</u>
\$14,806,853	Bioterrorism & public health	Maryland Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene
\$2,600,000	Upgrading of the catheterization lab for cardiac care	Bon Secours Health System
\$1,163,000	Prevention of juvenile delinquency	Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention
\$1,085,000 (total)	Mentoring children of prisoners	Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Maryland (\$500,000); Baltimore Mayor's Office for Children, Youth & Families (\$300,000); U.S. Dream Academy (\$200,000); Children Having Incarcerated Parents, Inc. (\$85,000)
\$993,005	Baltimore Police Dept. Crime Lab Improvement program	Baltimore City Police Dept.
\$866,716	Head Start projects	Friends of Family, Inc.
\$820,273	Crime lab funding	Maryland State Police
\$585,714	Training for the Regional Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)	Johns Hopkins Continuing Studies
\$378,000	Employment-related assistance for trade certified workers displaced from manufacturing facilities	Maryland Dept. of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
\$365,000	Strengthening Institutions program	Baltimore City Community College
\$300,000	Victim safety	Baltimore City Police Dept.
\$280,000	Immigration & refugee service	Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service
\$225,000	Education and technical assistance to end violence against women with disabilities	House of Ruth, Maryland, Inc.
\$225,000	Head Start collaboration	Maryland Dept. of Education
\$200,000	Head Start University partnership research projects	Johns Hopkins University

Congressman Cummings Votes for Passage of Middle Class Tax Cuts

On Thursday, September 23, Congressman Cummings joined 338 bipartisan House Members in passing the final version of a 10-year \$145 .9 billion middle class tax cut package, H.R. 1308.

“I voted for this bill because it will put more dollars into the hands of those who are facing economic hardships such as unemployment, paycuts, reduced health care coverage, higher tuition, or all of these circumstances,” Congressman Cummings said. “Our working families are hurting in this slow economy, so this tax cut will give them some relief.”

The legislation, which passed in its final version before going to the President, provides the following:

- **Deduction for married couples:** Married couples may take a standard deduction that is twice the level for single filers.
- **Child tax credit:** Those who have children may continue to take a \$1000 credit per child through 2009. Had this bill not passed, the credit would have decreased to \$700 beginning in 2005.
- **Military families:** Increased child credit for military families by allowing them to include tax-free combat pay when calculating their refundable child credit.
- **School supply credit for teachers:** Teachers who spend their own money on school supplies will be able to take a deduction of up to \$250.
- **Computer donations:** Companies that donate computer and technology equipment to schools may receive a tax credit.

“Even though many Americans will benefit from this tax bill, I wish this legislation did more to help hardworking American families,” Congressman Cummings said. “Therefore, I will continue pushing for legislation that closes tax loopholes and limits tax breaks that burden average Americans while only benefitting the wealthiest one percent of the nation’s taxpayers.”

Congressman Cummings’s District Offices

**1010 Park Avenue, Suite 105
Baltimore, MD 21201**
(410) 685-9199 and (410) 685-9399 fax

**754 Frederick Road
Catonsville, Maryland 21228**
(410) 719-8777 and (410) 455-0110 fax

Howard County Outreach Centers

First Monday of the Month:
Glenwood Library, 2350 Route 97
Cooksville, MD 21723
Hours: 4:00PM - 6:00PM or by appointment

Second Monday of the Month:
Howard County Central Library
10375 Little Patuxent Pkwy.
Columbia, MD 21044
Hours: 4:00PM - 6:00PM or by appointment

Second Wednesday of the Month:
Savage Library, 9525 Durness Lane
Laurel, MD 20723
Hours: 4:00PM - 6:00PM or by appointment

Third Monday of the Month:
Florence Bain Senior Center
5470 Ruth Keeton Way
Columbia, MD 21044
Hours: 9:00AM - 11 AM or by appointment

Fourth Monday of the Month: